THE ULTIMATES 2

EWING • FOREMAN • YACKEY

MARVEL

#6

The ultimate team has come together to solve the ultimate problems. Blue Marvel. Spectrum. Black Panther. Captain Marvel. America Chavez. They are...

THE ULTIMATES²

I AM THE *NEVER QUEEN.* I AM WHAT *MIGHT BE,* FOREVER OUTSIDE WHAT *IS.* FROM HERE, I SEE *ALL.*

FIRST THERE WERE THE *ULTIMATES*--FORMED BY CAROL DANVERS TO SOLVE COSMIC PROBLEMS BEFORE THEY *BECAME* PROBLEMS.

THEY SOLVED THE PROBLEM OF *GALACTUS,* THE WORLD-EATER, BY EVOLVING HIM INTO HIS *TRUE ROLE* AS *LIFEBRINGER.*

BUT ON A LATER MISSION, GALACTUS--AND THE ULTIMATES--DISCOVERED THAT *ETERNITY,* HE WHO *IS* THE *MULTIVERSE,* WAS IN *CHAINS.*

THE ULTIMATES *DISBANDED*--THEN *REFORMED,* AGAINST THE WISHES OF THEIR GOVERNMENT, TO SOLVE THIS NEW MYSTERY AS A *SECRET TEAM.*

HOWEVER, THEY WERE BEING MONITORED BY A *SECOND* GROUP--THE *TROUBLESHOOTERS*--WHO TRACKED THEM DOWN AND ENGAGED THEM IN *COMBAT.*

THE ULTIMATES WON THE BATTLE--BUT THE TROUBLESHOOTERS HAD BEEN INFILTRATED BY SOMETHING *MONSTROUS...* THE BEING NAMED *RODSTVOW.*

MEANWHILE, ON HEARING THE *LIVING TRIBUNAL'S* JUDGMENT THAT ALL THINGS WERE NOW *POSSIBLE,* CHAOS AND ORDER *KILLED HIM*--THEN MERGED INTO THEIR *OWN* LAW, SELF-NAMED *LOGOS.*

LOGOS EXECUTED THE GODLIKE CELESTIALS--THEN RESTORED GALACTUS' COSMIC HUNGER, MORE POTENT THAN EVER BEFORE. ALL THIS IS PART OF A PLAN.

SOMETHING WAS *INFLUENCING* LOGOS, *CONTROLLING* RODSTVOW...SOMETHING THAT HAS NOW *REVEALED* ITSELF...

...AS THE *FIRST FIRMAMENT*--THE VERY *FIRST* ITERATION OF THE *COSMOS ITSELF!*

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IN THE BEGINNING, THERE WAS ONLY *ONE* UNIVERSE.

ONLY *I*.

MY UNIVERSE WAS *PERFECT*...AND YET, I WAS ONLY *I*. I WAS *ALONE*.

AND *MOVED* BY THAT UNUTTERABLE LONELINESS, I MADE AN *ERROR*.

AT THE VERY DAWN OF ALL THAT *IS* OR *WAS*...

...I MADE *LIFE*.

THE FIRST FIRMAMENT.
AEONS AGO.

CELESTIAL BEINGS. MY SERVANTS. MY TOYS.

SOON, THEY HAD MADE SERVANTS OF THEIR OWN. THEY WERE CLEVER LITTLE PETS...

THEY WERE INDUSTRIOUS IN THEIR WORSHIP OF ME. THEIR NEED FOR MY FAVOR.

I LIKED THAT. I NAMED THEM ASPIRANTS.

WITH THEM, I WAS WELL PLEASED.

BUT THERE WERE OTHERS. MULTICOLORED REBELS.

THEY WANTED THEIR CREATIONS TO EVOLVE-- TO GAIN THE POWER OF UNIVERSES--

--AND FOR THE UNIVERSE TO EVOLVE WITH THEM, TO KNOW GROWTH AND CHANGE AND MORTALITY.

IT WAS MADNESS AND SACRILEGE.

IT WAS WAR.

A WAR THAT SHATTERED ME INTO *PIECES.*

IN THE FINAL CONFLAGRATION-- AS THE REBELS *DETONATED* THEIR UNIMAGINABLE WEAPONS--

--HUNDREDS OF NEW UNIVERSES *SPLIT OFF* FROM MY PURE SUBSTANCE.

IN *TERROR*--TO PRESERVE MY UNIQUENESS, MY VERY *SELF*--

--I FLED TO THE FARTHEST EDGES OF *BEING*, MY REMAINING ASPIRANTS *INSIDE* ME.

AND *BEHIND* ME...

...THOSE NEW UNIVERSES *COALESCED*, FORMING A NEW, *COLLECTIVE* ENTITY.

A *SECOND COSMOS*--AND THE *FIRST* OF A *NEW BREED.*

THE FIRST *MULTIVERSE.*

THIS SECOND INFINITY WAS COLONIZED BY THE REBELS.

THEY EVOLVED THEIR OWN SERVITORS--CALLING THEM "OMEGAS," IN OPPOSITION TO THE ALPHA THAT WAS I.

A SNUB. AN INSULT.

A CHALLENGE.

I WATCHED THEM, FROM MY FAR POINT, AS THEIR NEW REALITY AGED AROUND THEM. LIKE SOME ANIMAL.

IF MORTALITY WAS WHAT THEY CRAVED, LET THEM HAVE IT.

BUT THE DEATH OF ONE MULTIVERSE WAS ONLY THE BIRTH OF ANOTHER.

I WRITHED IN FRUSTRATION--IN EXILE--AS THE MULTIVERSE WAS REBORN, OVER AND OVER.

EVOLVING FURTHER WITH EACH ITERATION...

UNTIL NOW.

UNTIL YOU...

...ETERNITY.

BUT I WAS STRONGER, TOO. I HAD GROWN, IN THE VOID.

UNLIKE YOU, I WAS WHOLE--A SINGLE, UNBROKEN UNIT.

AND I HAD A WEAPON. A THING ALIEN TO YOU.

HATE.

I HAD HATE.

HATE ENOUGH TO HAVE PATIENCE. TO CHOOSE MY MOMENT.

AFTER YOUR DEATH AND RESURRECTION. AFTER YOUR CHANGE, FROM SEVENTH MULTIVERSE TO EIGHTH...

...WHEN YOU WERE WEAK...

...AND EASILY CAPTURED.

IT WASN'T ENOUGH. YOU WERE ONLY *CHAINED*. NOT *DEAD*.

SO I SENT MY *ASPIRANTS* FORTH--MY *ASTRO-GODS*, MY DARK *CELESTIALS*-- TO *INFECT* YOU.

TO INFILTRATE YOUR *TIMELINE*...

THIS IS *SIMON RODSTVOW*, PHILIP.

HE'LL BE WORKING WITH *US* NOW.

...TO CORRUPT YOUR *INNER WORKINGS*...

BROTHER? ARE YOU *WELL*?

...

YES.

STARK

...TO *DAMAGE* YOU.

WHEREVER AND *HOWEVER* THEY *COULD*.

AND NOW... EVERYTHING IS IN PLACE.

ARE YOU SCARED, MY CHILD?

SCARED TO DIE?

HUNGERRR...

GALACTUS. DEVOURER OF ALL.

BEHOLD.

WHILE YOU WERE DISTRACTED-- MANIPULATED BY FORCES AND STRATEGIES BEYOND YOUR IMAGINATION--

RODSTVOW. SERVANT OF COSMIC EVIL.

--GALACTUS FELL.

HHHNNN...

GGHHRRR...

HIS HUNGER IS NOW *UNCONTAINED* BY MIND OR MORALITY. NOR CAN IT EVER BE *SATED.*

HE WILL ONLY *SIPHON* ENERGY AND LIFE *OUTSIDE* THIS REALITY. *SLOWLY,* AT FIRST... *IMPERCEPTIBLY...*

THEN *FASTER AND FASTER,* ALL TIME AND SPACE, SPIRALING AWAY TO THE *FIRST FIRMAMENT...* LEAVING *NOTHING* BEHIND.

AND IT'S ALL *YOUR FAULT.*

RODSTVOW--

--SHUT UP!

COL. CAROL DANVERS.
CODENAME: "CAPTAIN MARVEL."
FLIGHT AND ENERGY MANIPULATION.

MONICA RAMBEAU.
CODENAME: "SPECTRUM."
LIVING POWER.

HE'S JUST SHRUGGING IT *OFF...*

HE'S TOO POWERFUL FOR ANY *ONE* OF US. THAT WAS THE MISTAKE I MADE *BEFORE*-- TRYING TO FIGHT HIM *ALONE.*

BUT *NONE* OF US ARE IN THIS ALONE.

TAKE MY HAND.

DR. ADAM BRASHEAR.
CODENAME: "BLUE MARVEL."
THE ANTIMATTER MAN.

THE PHOTON IS ITS *OWN* ANTI-PARTICLE. IT'S HOW WE CAN TRANSMIT *ENERGY* BETWEEN MY *ANTIMATTER BODY* AND YOUR *LIGHT-FORM.*

IT ALSO MEANS WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO *COMBINE OUR FORCES*...AND *MAYBE* EVEN...

...*MERGE TOGETHER.*

INTO AN *EXPONENTIALLY* MORE POWERFUL FORM.

WHOA--

--I'M-- INSIDE YOUR *BODY,* ADAM-- MOVING YOUR *LIMBS--*

--OUR LIMBS--

INTERESTING SENSATION.

YOU'RE THE COMBAT *STRATEGIST,* MONICA--

--YOU TAKE THE *LEAD,* I'LL BACK YOU *UP.*

OMEGA SYMBOLS. *HMM.*

GOT IT. GET *READY,* ADAM.

WITH OUR POWERS *COMBINED...*

...THIS'LL MAKE A HELL OF A *SHOW.*

HHHRRSSSS...

NICE. THAT *HURT* HIM.

CAROL--YOUR TURN. ABSORB WHATEVER ENERGY YOU *CAN.*

START WITH AMBIENT *LIGHT.*

AMERICA CHAVEZ. ULTIMATES LEADER.

GOT IT--

FEED IT INTO *MONICA AND ADAM*--KEEP THEM *FUELED!*

TROUBLESHOOTERS-- HIT HIM FROM THE SIDES! WHATEVER YOU'VE GOT!

ARE WE TAKING ORDERS FROM *THEM* NOW?

WE TAKE ORDERS FROM *PHIL VOGT.*

TERRY...?

HE SAYS HE'S MADE HIS *DECISION.* WE'RE TO ASSIST THE ULTIMATES *ANY WAY WE CAN.*

AND HE SAID TO GIVE YOU A *NAME,* JIM--

THE TROUBLESHOOTERS. PSYCHIC MILITARY UNIT.

--"EMMETT PROUDHAWK."

THAT *MEAN* ANYTHING TO YOU?

...

THAT MEANS HE'S *SERIOUS.*

YEARS AGO, WE WERE PART OF A SO-CALLED "PSYCHIC WARFARE UNIT"--THE FIRST ETERNITY BATTALION.

EMMETT WAS THE LEADER--THE CLOSEST THING TO A REAL PSYCHIC AMONG US.

AND THEN-- ON WUNDAGORE MOUNTAIN-- SOMETHING HAPPENED.

WE WALKED INTO A WAR BETWEEN BEAST-MEN AND A DEMONIC ENTITY--SOMETHING FROM OUTSIDE NORMAL SPACE AND TIME.

MOST OF US DIED. AND EMMETT...

...EMMETT SAW THE FACE OF HELL. AND BEYOND.

PHIL AND I WERE FOUND THREE DAYS LATER. THE BEAST-MEN WERE GONE...AND WE'D CHANGED.

WE WERE CONNECTED TO SOMETHING...A QUASI-MAGICAL FORCE THAT BOOSTED NATURAL PSI-TALENT.

THE PSI-FORCE.

I TAUGHT YOU THREE TO *ACCESS* IT--USE IT TO AUGMENT YOUR *OWN* TALENTS.

BUT I NEVER TOLD YOU WHAT IT *WAS.*

PUT YOUR HANDS INTO THE FLAME OF THE *SWORD,* EVERYONE.

CONCENTRATE. LINK YOUR *MINDS.* YOUR *PSI-TALENTS.*

EMMETT? IT'S *JIM.*

PLEASE.

WE *NEED* YOU.

THE PSI-HAWK.

MY POWERS-- THEY'RE *GONE.*

I'M *HUMAN* AGAIN--

YEAH, THAT'LL HAPPEN, TERRY.

EVERYONE THOUGHT EMMETT *DIED* ON WUNDAGORE MOUNTAIN. BUT *WE* KNEW--ME AND PHIL.

HOLY...

YEAH.

AND THAT'S JUST WITH *THREE* OF US.

LET-- LET *GO* OF ME--

EMMETT PROUDHAWK *BECAME* THE PSI-FORCE. A *LIVING REPOSITORY* OF *PSYCHIC MIGHT.*

AND FOR A *FEW MINUTES* AT A TIME--IF WE OPEN THE *DOOR*--

--HE CAN WALK IN THE WORLD WITH THE POWER OF A *GOD.*

FASCINATING.

AND *TIMELY.*

T'CHALLA OF WAKANDA. TITLE: "BLACK PANTHER." SCIENTIFIC ROYALTY.

RIGHT. IF RODSTVOW'S *DISTRACTED,* IT GIVES US *BREATHING ROOM...*

...AND THE CHANCE TO PUT ALL THIS *ENERGY* WHERE IT'LL DO THE *MOST GOOD.*

SMART THINKING.

CONNER...

...HEAL.

AHHHH!

WELCOME BACK TO THE *LAND OF THE LIVING,* MR. SIMS.

CONNER SIMS.
CODENAME: "ANTI-MAN."
COSMIC FORCE.

CONNER, THIS IS *ADAM.*

WE HAVE A *BIG PROBLEM*-- AND SOMETHING TELLS ME YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN *SOLVE* IT.

ADAM? LORD, I CAN HEAR YOUR--

OH. OH, NO.

GALACTUS?

...

YOU'RE MY *BEST FRIEND,* ADAM.

YOU KNOW THAT.

CONNER?

WHAT... WHAT ARE YOU...

GALACTUS!

MASTER!

YOU WHO GAVE ME *HOPE* WHEN I WAS *LOST*-- WHO GAVE ME *POWER*--

--I *RETURN* THAT POWER TO YOU NOW!

THE POWER OF THE LIFEBRINGER!

DRINK *DEEP* OF THE CUP I OFFER! LET WHAT YOU WERE BE *BURNED AWAY*--IN THE FIRES OF YOUR *HIGHEST SELF!*

I GIVE YOU *COSMIC ABSOLUTION!*

I GIVE YOU MY LIFE!

USE IT

...

MY HERALD...?

YOU.

YOU WISHED ME TO KNOW *HUNGER*, LITTLE THING?

TO *FEED?*

N-NO!

HAVE *MERCY*, O GALACTUS! I--I WAS *ONLY* OBEYING--

THEN I WILL GRANT YOUR *WISH.*

GIVE ME YOUR *SECRETS*, LITTLE THING.

NOOOO!

THERE. NOW I KNOW WHAT *IT* KNEW. THE *NAME* OF THE ENEMY.

BUT... I AM WEAK. *VULNERABLE.* I REQUIRE TIME TO *RENEW* MYSELF.

WHEN I NEED YOU, I WILL *FIND* YOU.

UNTIL THEN... *READY* YOURSELVES.

THE FIRST FIRMAMENT HAS DECLARED WAR.

THE ALPHA FLIGHT SPACE STATION.
SOME TIME LATER.

THE PAPERWORK'S ALL DONE. WELCOME TO *ALPHA FLIGHT.*

OFFICIALLY, AT LEAST, THE ULTIMATES WILL OPERATE FROM *HERE*--KIND OF A *RESIDENT SUPER-TEAM.*

NOW THAT VOGT IS WILLING TO WORK *WITH* US, THINGS WILL BE *EASIER.*

AND IF *NECESSARY*--DESPITE THE CHANGES IN *WAKANDA*--I CAN *STILL* APPLY POLITICAL PRESSURE *MYSELF.*

GOOD. WE NEED THAT NONSENSE OUT OF THE *WAY.*

WE KNOW THE ENEMY'S *NAME* NOW. WE KNOW WHAT WE'RE *FIGHTING.*

AND IF WE'RE NOT *ENOUGH?* THE *MULTIVERSE* IS *FINISHED.*

AS A *CONCEPT.*

YOU'RE THE *EXPERT,* MAC. WHAT'S THE NEXT MOVE?

ME? I'M GETTING IN *TRAINING.* HEADING TO *COLLEGE,* GETTING MY *COSMIC 101.*

NOT EVEN A METAPHOR.

THE *REST* OF YOU--SAME THING. *LEARN. GROW.* BE *READY.*

BECAUSE SOMEONE STARTED A *WAR* TODAY--A WAR ON *EVERY LEVEL OF REALITY*--

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS THE ULTIMATES² IN...

--AND THE NEXT ATTACK IS COMING *SOON.*

WAR IN HEAVEN

AL EWING
WRITER

TRAVEL FOREMAN
ARTIST

MATT YACKEY
COLOR ARTIST

VC'S JOE SABINO
LETTERER

CHRISTIAN WARD
COVER ARTIST

ALANNA SMITH
EDITOR

TOM BREVOORT
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

AXEL ALONSO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

JOE QUESADA
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER

DAN BUCKLEY
PRESIDENT

ALAN FINE
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

THE ULTI-MAILS

WRITE TO US AT MHEROES@MARVEL.COM (MARK "OKAY TO PRINT")

Hello, Ulti-mates! Al Ewing here, with more of your letters--mark them "OKAY TO PRINT" and send them to mheroes@marvel.com, and we'll print the best! Let's dive right in...

Okay! First off, I'm loving THE ULTIMATES right now. Excellent story, plus some of the best usage and RESPECKS for Galactus I've seen in, like, forever. (Seriously, I've lost count of the times the poor guy's been used as a punching bag to show how much of a badass some newbie who gets put in limbo months later is.)

That being said, I have to ask...

Do you guys play the *Shin Megami Tensei* series? Because with what you've done with Master Order and Lord Chaos recently...geez Louise. Master Order in this issue and the last one looks like YHVH (one of the most powerful and utterly evil/insane bosses in the franchise) and Lord Chaos looks like something out of a creepypasta (one of the actually scary ones).

Plus, Logos...that design is so totally a *Shin Megami Tensei* boss! Admit it, your artists were using that has an inspiration!

I'm not saying this is a bad thing, though! Master Order has never been scarier (dat smile when he confronted the In-Betweener), and Logos is just...wow. HS quotient through the roof; definitely will buy the next issue.

Keep up the good work.
Jonathan Spires
Middlesboro, KY

Sorry, Jonathan, but I don't play the series you mentioned. When I first saw Travel's design for Logos, though, it reminded me of some early visualizations of angels--I want to say pre-Raphaelite cherubim, but if any art experts are reading this, feel free to correct me--so it's possible that was a common inspiration for Logos and for a video game end-boss.

ULTIMATES² #1 was outstanding! Travel Foreman's art is a wonderful fit for Al's cosmic plot. It's got the feel of a great Jim Starlin story. I'm looking forward to the next issue.

Rob Reich
DePere, WI

Glad you're enjoying the book, Rob! And it's high praise indeed for us to be compared to Jim Starlin!

Mates,

Issue #4 was the slugfest we knew was coming, but I really appreciated that each conflict was sort of physical and sort of not--more ideological, or even mystical, in nature. Fisticuffs and energized ethos together! Logos and the word of law/the Never Queen with all her possible whatevers was a nice setup for the other dialectical struggles to come: Adam and Rodstvow, Monica and Terry. But it's the end of the issue that did me in. You've humanized Galactus so much, it was hard to see him forced back to what he had been--the triumph of his best self, subverted by a clearly unbalanced entity with too much power.

While there's a place for the hushed techno-mystical nihilism you find dissertating in Warren Ellis or Jonathan Hickman, and while I have great love for the mind-bending psycho-navigations and projections of giddy Grant Morrison creationism(s), I think what I'm really responding to most in your run with THE ULTIMATES is the fact that you maintain a sense of wonder and possibility in the face of some of the exact same stuff. Good show.

Cheers,
Dr. Nate Pritts

Thanks, Dr. Nate! I try to keep some emotional hooks in with the brain-bending action, so I'm glad you appreciate that side. As for Galactus... yeah, that was a rough couple of issues. We won't be doing that again...or will we?

I said it once and I'll say it again: THE ULTIMATES is the best thing coming out of Marvel, period. This ULTIMATES run has had the best writing in the majority of the issues, and with the exception of maybe one issue, has had absolutely outstanding artwork. The issue I am opposed to finally granted my wish by giving Black Panther a different look. At times I believe I love Al's work more than I like Brian Michael Bendis' work--I believe mainly because of what he does with Blue Marvel's character. Now, without going into a useless rant, would it be too much to finally get a new permanent look for Black Panther? If the aim is to keep a traditional Black Panther look, I know it's possible to bring it up to date following the example set in the *Civil War* movie. Please grant me this simple wish. It makes no sense to me how Iron Man has become more advanced in the Model 51 prime armor. When looking back in earlier comics, Black Panther had already achieved that type of design, as seen in his run-in with Doctor Doom. Look, I love that Blue Marvel is getting the god-like attention and writing he deserves and is being called probably the number one powerhouse in Marvel Comics, but I am more concerned with what needs to be done to Black Panther's character. Please, guys, it's a simple request.

Joey Bull

P.S. Bring Night Thrasher back to the ULTIMATES run.

Hi, Joey--thanks for the kind words! As for Black Panther's look--his solo book would be the place to go for a request like that. That said, I kind of like his sleek, simple look better than Iron Man's endless reworkings. Iron Man always feels like he's very much of his time, so his armors date quickly, whereas T'Challa's outfit just gets more timeless.

Creators,

Tonight I have crossed over. Tonight I have passed through a portal into the new dimension of THE ULTIMATES². I have returned after Season One to find the group having to come back together, of course. Conner Sims' new form is certainly proving to be too much for one powerful being to handle alone. We need the original five back because they know how to handle these powerful cosmic threats. I love this book, though, because it makes me feel like I'm being rearranged internally and externally sometimes, and that maybe our seemingly earthbound problems are universal and even cosmic in their scope or implications. Please keep writing and drawing this one. It is transcendent and takes me to a whole other level.

Daniel Veuleman
Shreveport, LA

Thanks, Daniel! Glad to hear the cosmic happenings in every issue of ULTIMATES² resonate with you--there's more to come!

Dear ULTIMATES,

I'm obsessed with this series--it's truly the only ongoing series that I'm reading, and I was thinking of how this team could possibly grow into something like the AVENGERS. Honestly, I would love to see new characters that aren't really active in the Marvel Universe show up here and help with all these big-time-hero problems. I hope this series keeps going because there are so many approaches you can take with this type of team, and adding a character could certainly challenge the team leader, America Chavez, and help her grow as a leader. Keep up the amazing work!

Juan Diego Montano

Thank you kindly, Juan! We're going to be bringing in at least one old favorite to help out the Ultimates soon enough--I'll let you find out who for yourself, but I think you might get a kick out of it!

Next issue, Aud Koch takes the art reins for a spell--beginning with a one-issue trip to the Secret Empire, to find out how the Ultimates are coping with a world under Steve Rogers' control! Until then, be kind to yourselves and each other, Ulti-mates!

Al

ADDITIONAL READING:

TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENS TO THE ULTIMATES BETWEEN NOW AND ISSUE #7, PICK UP *SECRET EMPIRE* #0.
TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE BATTLE ON WUNDAGORE MOUNTAIN, CHECK OUT *AVENGERS* #187, AND TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DEATH CELESTIALS, READ UP ON *DEFENDERS* (2011). ALL ARE AVAILABLE DIGITALLY AT COMICSTORE.MARVEL.COM.

NEXT:

ZONE